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**THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HIV/AIDS PATIENT
ADHERENCE TO ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY (ART): A SOCIAL WORK
STUDY**

by

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DEDICATION

I walked through your lives...

robbers

murderers

grandmothers

children

old men

policemen

refugees

young women

doctors

counsellors

priests

wives

teachers

students

happy people, sad people,

the rich and the poor

innocent or guilty

colleagues, family and friends

the creation of society

ordinary human beings

...by sharing your experiences and dreams

I could meet my own.

I will be forever grateful to thee!

THE RESEARCHER



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ABSTRACT

THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING HIV/AIDS PATIENT ADHERENCE TO ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY (ART): A SOCIAL WORK STUDY

The study emanates from the need to identify the biopsychosocial factors that influence patients' adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) within the South African context. The specific goal of the study was to explore these in order to make recommendations to enhance service delivery.

Applied research was conducted, with its primary task being to stimulate thought and action concerning the challenges faced by patients who are on ART. In order to gather comprehensive data, the researcher engaged in a combination of the qualitative and quantitative approaches. For the qualitative case study the researcher made use of semi-structured interviews, utilizing the non-probability sampling method, aiming to understand and interpret the meaning that the multidisciplinary team accorded to matters of antiretroviral treatment. For the quantitative part of the study the probability random sampling method was made use of for the quantitative descriptive survey. Questionnaires were employed to collect data from 201 patients already on antiretroviral medication.

The conclusions, which were drawn from the research findings, identified challenges to adherence to ART: the study confirmed that since the advent of combination antiretroviral therapy (HAART), HIV/AIDS has been transformed into a manageable and chronic condition, and has undoubtedly extended and improved the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS. However, it also confirmed that ART is a complex intervention, which is accompanied by severe biopsychosocial implications, requiring near-perfect adherence in order to prevent the development of resistance. The impact that the various psychosocial needs of millions of HIV/AIDS people living on ART will have on current social structures and services, will tax the available professional social



services, particularly the social work profession. The social correlation of HIV/AIDS and poverty is endorsed by the findings, confirming that the high level of unemployment, coupled with families who are headed by women and who receive little support, lead to almost total dependency on social security. The findings further indicate a specific relationship between socio-economic circumstances and the ability to adhere to ART.

Empowering HIV/AIDS patients, to be able to adhere to ART, is therefore indicated, as is the further need for a regulator of HIV/AIDS support services, in order to protect and promote high standards of service delivery, especially counselling.

Keywords: Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), antiretroviral therapy (ART), assessing, biopsychosocial, adherence, compliance, concordance, counselling, counsellors, human immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV), psychosocial, resistance, social work.



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SAMEVATTING

DIE BIOPSIGOSOSIALE FAKTORE WAT MIV/VIGS PASIËNTE SE VOLDOENING AAN DIE VEREISTES VAN ANTIRETROVIRALE TERAPIE (ART) BEÏNVLOED: 'N MAATSKAPLIKE WERK ONDERSOEK

Die doel van hierdie studie was die identifisering en beskrywing van die biopsigososiale faktore wat moontlik MIV/VIGS pasiënte se voldoening aan die eise van teenretrovirale terapie (ART) kan beïnvloed. Om aanbevelings te maak rakende relevante faktore wat in ag geneem moet word in die assessering van HIV/VIGS pasiënte, vir die gebruik van teenretrovirale medikasie, om derhalwe die ontwikkeling van weerstandigheid teenoor teenretrovirale middels te minimaliseer. Die navorser huldig die opinie dat beter kennis en begrip aangaande die biopsigososiale faktore wat teenretrovirale terapie (ART) beïnvloed, tot meer effektiewe dienslewering aan MIV/VIGS pasiënte kan lei, deur maatskaplike werkers en ander multidissiplinêre spanlede betrokke by sodanige dienslewering.

Ten einde navorsingsdata te versamel, is die volgende navorsingsmetodes deur die navorser gebruik: Binne die kwalitatiewe navorsingsparadigma het die navorser van die nie-waarskynlike steekproefmetodes gebruik gemaak om respondente te identifiseer uit die multidissiplinêre spanlede tans betrokke by Teenretrovirale dienslewering. Data is versamel deur onderhoude aan die hand van semi-gestruktureerde onderhoudskedules te voer. Hoofemas is geselekteer en veskeie subtemas het uit die navorsingstudie na vore gekom.

Tydens die kwantitatiewe fase van die navorsingsprojek is 'n ewekansige monster geselekteer wat bestaan het uit 201 respondente om beskrywende data te verkry. 'n Vraelys is gebruik om data te verkry van pasiënte wat reeds teenretrovirale terapie ontvang.

Die navorsingsprojek kan as toegepaste navorsing geklassifiseer word omdat dit ten doel het om groter begrip van die uitdagings wat die teenretrovirale



terapie aan die pasiënt stel, by die lede van die multidissiplinêre span te ontwikkel. Die navorsingsresultate sal gebruik word om die beradingspraktyk vir MIV/VIGS pasiënte sodanig aan te pas, dat dit sal lei tot beter voldoening aan die vereistes van teenretrovirale terapie. Ook om probleme wat tans deur multidissiplinêre spanlede betrokke by antiretrovirale dienslewering te verlig.

Aan die hand van die navorsingsbevindings het die navorser die volgende gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings vir die praktyk geformuleer: Die navorsing het bevestig dat sedert die beskikbaarstelling van teenretrovirale terapie (ART), die lewens van HIV/ VIGS pasiente verleng en kwaliteits lewe besorg, dit is van 'kroniese siekte toestand. Die navorsing het bevestig dat teenretrovirale terapie (ART) 'n komplekse intervensie is, wat perfekte voldoening aan die vereistes van teenretrovirale terapie (ART) vereis om die ontwikkeling van weerstandigheid te voorkom. Die gepaardgaande ernstige biopsigososiale implikasie en die impak van die vele psigososiale behoeftes van MIV/VIGS pasiente, op teenretroviral medikasie, sal huidige ondersteunings strukture en dienste uitdaag tot verantwoordelikheid roep en onder druk plaas. Spesifiek die maatskaplike werk profesie word

Die verwantskap tussen MIV/VIGS en armoede word verder deur die studie bevestig. Hoe werkloosheid syfer, vrouens en kinders met weinig ondersteuning en die afhanklikheid van staatspensioene. Verbeterde staatspensioen kriteria vir HIV/VIGS pasiënte word voorgestel ten einde pasiënte en families in staat te stel om vinniger toegang tot staatshulp te verkry. Die uitbreiding van pleegouer kapasiteit word ook voorgestel. Die verhouding tussen swak sosio-ekonomiese omstandighede en die moontlikheid om te voldoen aan die vereistes van ARV is ook aangedui. Die bemagtiging van MIV/VIGS pasiente, om faktore aan te spreek wat die voldoening aan die vereistes van ART te ondersteun voldoen is aanbeveel met spesifieke verwysing na Ondersteunings groepe en NRO's moet onderwerp word aan sekere standaarde. Aandag moet gegee word aan die werksomstandighede, werksbeskrywing en standaarde van beraders. Die navorsing was uitvoerbaar en binne die finansiële en praktiese raamwerk van die navorser al die navorsings doelwitte is bereik.



Sleuteltermes: assessering, teenretrovirale middels (ARM), biospsigososiale berader, menslike immuniteitsgebreksindroom (MIV), maatskaplike werker, psigososiale, samewerking, voldoening, verworwe immuniteitsgebrek sindroom (VIGS), weerstandigheid.



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